

Observations of the Summary of Interim Recommendations

Writer is employed as an investigator and instructor of fraud investigation techniques in a suburban community of 86,000 upper-middle class population and two major shopping malls. The socio-economic environment lends itself as a haven for thieves. The population is rich in suitable credit ratings and the service-oriented banks and retailers are unknowingly ready to assist in exploiting them. The following observations are based upon more than ten years of experience combating the migration of criminal trends toward "white collar" crime on the local, state and federal level:

Identity thieves are varied in their motivations, tactics and organizational levels. Jilted lovers and greedy family members behave differently from unwed mothers and gambling addicts and decidedly different from ex-drug lords and alien "Mafia" type gangs. We must always be aware that terrorists, both foreign and domestic will adopt the identities of the law-abiding in attempts to keep their actions covert. Each group contributes to the decay of the national economic growth and the inability of any consumer to function without inhibition; but all cannot be detected or dealt with in the same manner.

Points of compromise of personal identity information vary as well. The damage is done for those of us who used our social security number as college and military id's or had it published on every medical record since the inception of the "Blue Cross Card". Some benefit may be gained by shredding our trash but not if the thief gains access to the "pre-approved" card sent, unsolicited, to our mailboxes. The redaction of our credit card number on the receipts we obtain from the sales clerk does not protect us from the unscrupulous clerk who compromises the cash register roll. And, the modern concept of "phishing" now allows the victim to be an unwitting accomplice in their own demise.

The use of someone else's credit card numbers on the internet or the addition of a third party to an existing credit account is perpetrated much differently than the paying of utility bills in another state via telephone, or the purchase of an automobile, or the re-mortgaging of your house. The illegal alien's use of a social security number to obtain employment or medical benefits does not compare with the grief incurred when a person is booked for the commission of a crime under your name, birth date, and social security number.

Common links in each of the above illustrations is use of a computer to facilitate the commission of each crime, our failure to mandate cross referencing of available information, the minimizing of the non-violent antisocial behavior by law enforcement, the judiciary and the penal system, and the deterioration of the individual citizens ability to say "No! I do not want the convenience of additional credit".

Our service-oriented business community seems to have forgotten that SECURITY is a service. Perhaps penalties should be attached to the failure to provide it.

The harsh reality is: We deserve to have our identity compromised and we deserve to have our economy destroyed.

It starts with the banker who makes the business decision, that it is less costly to tolerate the 1.4% loss from the gross profits realized when mass mailings of pre-approved credit cards to college sophomores and second tier borrowers are filled out by persons other than the intended

credit history-holder, than it is to cooperate with law enforcement officials and prosecute offenders. The thought process does not take into account the fact that the criminal element just became wealthier, bolder and stronger.

The retailer who fails to train a sales clerk to request supporting identification because it is too time consuming or expensive to become involved in the detection of the fraud, when the bank is going to make good on the transaction anyway, adds a second layer of complacency.

The consumers, who chastise the sales clerk requesting proper documentation, may well be the same persons expounding the "not in my backyard" mentality when it comes to financing and building department of corrections facilities needed to supply credibility to the criminal justice process. Somehow a "tax" imposed by the criminal element goes undetected and is more-easily incorporated into the cost of living than the civic taxes that are publicly debated.

Finally, the police departments, who fail to recognize just how insidious these crimes really are, are not training their officers to prevent, detect, investigate, arrest or prosecute the ever increasing number of perpetrators.

No amount of legislation is going to eradicate this problem.

The nation's marketing people are going to have to shift their message from the profit driven "buy me now and worry about paying later" to one of "here is what is good for the security of the national economy". In much the same way that we are going to have to train ourselves to ration our energy consumption and use of the national resources in a manner that promotes the health of the environment; we are going to have to educate the population on the discipline needed to preserve our personal and national security.

In short, the task force needs to promote a partnership of the public relations people representing bankers, retailers and law enforcers, united in the common goal of educating the public that there is nothing instant or convenient about a trustworthy financial system. And then, we are all going to have to discipline ourselves to live up to the expectation that this country is still going to be an equitable place for the next generation to reside in.

Respectfully submitted,

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Professional experience

35 years of police experience – 28 years with Troy Police Dept.

Served in patrol, court officer, communications, investigations, traffic safety, surveillance, field training officer and retail liaison positions.

The investigations of fraud incidents at local retail establishments have lead to more than 225 federal indictments. Currently all adjudications have been in favor of the prosecution.

Served as a consultant to Michigan Retailers Association

Co-authored the Michigan Counsel On Law Enforcement Standards certified Identity Theft Investigations Manual distributed by the Michigan State Police

Additional professional activities

A hazardous-materials technician, trained in weapons of mass destruction and radiological monitoring. Currently an Oakland County East Regional Response Team. Firearms instructor. Emergency Vehicle Operations instructor.

Professional memberships

Member of the **I**nternational **A**ssociation of **F**inancial **C**rimes **I**nvestigators.

Department of Homeland Security Regional Response Team

Assisted in the founding of **D**etroit **M**etropolitan **I**ntity **F**raud **T**ask **F**orce